



LEISURE ACCESS SERVICES

Serving People with Disabilities

Senior Program Expands



Miami-Dade Community Action Agency participants paint with Leisure Access Employee, Rose.

Leisure Access Services has acquired a partnership with Miami-Dade Community Action Agency (C.A.A.). In March 2003, Leisure Access South opened a free P.A.C.E (People with Arthritis Can Exercise) class for seniors at Perrine Neighborhood Center, one of the C.A.A. sites. The program was very successful in opening new avenues to offer our services throughout C.A.A. sites around Miami Dade



Miami-Dade Community Action Agency participants show off their creations.

County. Presently, Leisure Access Services is delivering programs such as PACE, Arts & Crafts, and chess at nine different C.A.A. sites all over Dade County. Our goal is to provide quality, therapeutic recreation programs to enhance health and fitness and provide a better quality of life to seniors in our community.

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Kayaking Program with DCPS & Crandon Adventures



On land instructions...

On land paddling instructions...

The push off...

Leisure Access Services, Eco-Tours, and Miami Dade Public Schools partnered to conduct a kayaking clinic for physically impaired students in November. Fifteen physically disabled students from Miami-Dade Public Schools' Adapted P.E. program came to Crandon Park.

The students were acquainted with the sea kayaks and instructed on how to maneuver them. They did so by first learning the basics while on land and then put those skills to work on the water.

All of the students were able to participate and for some of them, this was the first time in their lives to ever be on water. This was made possible by a boating grant to purchase adaptive equipment such as outriggers



Student's first paddling experience.

and seats for safety and balance as well as bent shaft paddles not only for their comfort but also to compensate for the students' limited mobility.

The schools will continue to come and participate at Crandon Park. In addition to kayaking, the students will eventually learn to snorkel as a part of their adventures experiencing Miami-Dade Parks. We thank the National Safe Boating Council, Tim Andexler, Dr. Jane Greenberg and Ernie Lynk for coordinating this program.

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Basketball Clinics

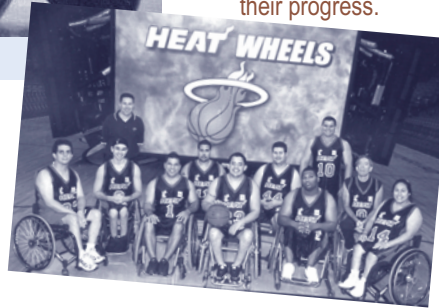


Miami Heat Wheels in action

Miami Heat Wheels players voluntarily attend and become mentors and role models to the students. The clinics provide guidance, fitness and knowledge while students have fun through recreation. This also assists us in recruiting future wheel chair basketball athletes while marketing our Leisure Access Programs.

With only one loss, our Miami Heat is having a great season so far. They are traveling to Nationals and we wish them luck.

It is a pleasure to see students progressing with their basketball skills in such a short period of time. Dade County Public Schools and Leisure Access Services are uniting forces to teach wheelchair basketball skills to children with physical disabilities. By having a smaller group that attends clinics at the YET Center and Goulds Gym, it helps recreational therapists focus on the individual's needs and skills and to observe their progress.



Florman Family Foundation Funds Basketball Wheelchairs

The Florman Family Foundation donated \$10,000 to the Leisure Access Services to purchase new wheelchairs for our nationally ranked basketball team. These chairs are designed to turn quickly, maneuver easily and protect players from tipping over while moving fast. The chairs will help motivate the team to a number one finish this year at Nationals!

Risk Insurance Management Society Supports the Leisure Access Foundation

Each year around the Holidays, the Greater Miami Chapter of the Risk and Insurance Management Society makes a donation to an organization that implements good safety practices. This year, due to the suggestion of Dr. Jane Greenburg at DCPS, they chose to make a \$1,500 contribution to the Leisure Access Foundation. We really appreciate the support from this important professional organization and will use the funds for the wheelchair basketball team to travel to the National Tournament in Bloomington, Illinois in February.

Thank You Park Employees



Generous Park Employees Support Leisure Access Foundation Through Their United Way Contributions

Thanks to the incredible generosity of Park employees, the Leisure Access Foundation can further its mission to provide accessible sports and recreation to children and adults with disabilities. Park employees pledged over \$15,000.00 to the Foundation during this fall's United Way campaign. The United Way "Team" spent much of the month of September meeting with employees and encouraging them to participate through payroll deduction and the great variety of Special Events hosted by different sections of the Department. The Leisure Access Foundation sponsored a light breakfast at the early morning campaign stops. Pictured above are: Catherine Minnas County United Way Coordinator; Vivian Donnell Rodriguez, Park Department Director; Tim Byrnes, Region Manager; Elisa Smith, Communications; Jose Hoyos, Crandon Park; Esther Reyes, Crandon Park and Lucy Binhack, Leisure Access Services

U.S.T.A. Holds Fundraiser for Leisure Access Foundation

District nine of the United States Tennis Association held a tennis tournament to raise funds for the Leisure Access wheelchair tennis program. The event took place on September 28th at the Tennis Center at Crandon Park. The dollars will be used to purchase a wheelchair for novices to borrow while learning the basics of the sport.

The wheelchair tennis program is free to all wheelchair athletes who want to learn how to play tennis and is held each Saturday morning at The Big Five Club, 9299 SW 71 Terrace (and Tamiami Trail). For more information, call Ruben Lamothe at 305-392-9947 or pager 305-339-9872.

Autistic Children Learn To Golf



Coach Lloyd Warwick instructs Alex on the basics of putting. Golf lessons began in the month of January for several children facing the challenges of autism at Briar Bay Golf Course. Coach Lloyd Warwick of the Parks and Recreation department is sharing his knowledge of the game of golf with several young students, ages 6 1/2 to 11 years old. The children started off learning the basics of putting as seen in the picture. The students will advance their skills according to their individual abilities. It is an exciting program for these children and for their families.

Sailing At Amelia Earhart Park

This winter, Amelia Earhart Park's sailing program hosted a group of deaf students from Hialeah Middle School. During six 3 hour sessions, they were taught how to sail a small sailboat.

With the initiative put forward from Lars Bergquist, Parks and Recreation Manager, and Tim Andexler of D.C.P.S., the Junior Sailing Program was created for children with special needs.

While offering a "hands on" approach, the program taught the children, both landside and in the water, different skills involved in sailing a vessel using the power of wind. David Diamonds, Physical Education Teacher also with D.C.P.S., tested the swimming skills of the participants previous to the program.

Instructors of the course were Carlos Varas, Recreation Specialist I, Waldo de la Torre, Park Service Aide, and Franklin Wollman, Lifeguard. Leisure Access prepared these instructors on how to deal with deaf children. Basic instruction in American Sign Language was given by Vicky Earhardt of D.C.P.S.

A special appreciation to Barbara Nesmith, Physical Education Teacher and Principal Marta Montiel for their vision and assistance in exposing their students to the exciting sport of sailing.



Amelia Earhart sailing instructor, Carlos Varas, uses sign language to teach deaf student from Hialeah Middle School to sail.



Goodbye Kay Petitt

It is with mixed emotions that the Park Department says goodbye to Kay Petitt, who since 1995, has been running the Leisure Access Services Administrative office. After 26 years with the Park Department, she decided to retire this January. Her family, friends, colleagues, and "bus buddies" (Kay commuted from Homestead), showed up to send her off at a wonderful party in her honor. While we are sad to see her go and will miss her terribly, we wish her the very best in her retirement. She is pictured here, (on the left) with Lucy Binhack, (center) and the new secretary for Leisure Access Services, Eunice Villamizar. So it's goodbye and good luck Kay, and hello and welcome Eunice!



Miami-Dade Park and Recreation

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Winter 2004

ONGOING ACTIVITIES

- **National Wheelchair Basketball Tournament- February 17th - 22nd - Bloomington, Illinois**
- **National Goal Ball Tournament - February 27th-29th-Kalamazoo Michigan**
- **NASDAQ Wheelchair tennis clinic March 30th- Crandon Park**
- **Dip & Dance - May 28th - 6:30-10:30 - Cutler Ridge Pool**



Alex Penelas
Mayor

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CONTACT INFORMATION

If you have comments or suggestions for this newsletter, please contact Dana Pezoldt at dpezoldt@miamidade.gov.



www.miamidade.gov/parks

**For more information
call 305-755-7848 v/tdd.**

Miami-Dade County provides equal access and equal opportunity in employment and services and does not discriminate on the basis of disability.

Call 305-755-7848 (v/tdd) for material in accessible format, information on access for People with Disabilities, or for sign language interpreter services (7 days in advance).



Miami-Dade Park and Recreation

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Come Play With Us!

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